

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4230

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, VT, CI

SUBJECT: NEW CHILEAN AMBASSADOR TO HOLY SEE

1. HECTOR RIESLE, 31-YEAR-OLD FORMER PROFESSOR LEGAL HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY, PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO POPE PAUL APRIL 6 AS FIRST AMBASSADOR NAMED BY CHILEAN JUNTA TO HOLY SEE.

2. IN HIS BRIEF ADDRESS, RIESLE NOTED THAT CHILE "HAVING RECENTLY SUFFERED THE GRAVEST CRISIS IN ITS HISTORY, NOW LOOKS TO THE FUTURE WITH RENEWED HOPE." AFTER MENTIONING THAT GOC IS DETERMINED TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL UNITY ON BASIS OF SOLIDARITY OF FREE MEN, NEW AMBASSADOR STATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WELL AWARE THAT THIS WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT A MORAL RENEWAL COMPRISING "FREEDOM, RESPONSIBILITY, RESPECT, UNDERSTANDING AND BROTHERHOOD, CEMENTED IN THE NATURAL AND INVOLABLE RIGHTS OF THE HUMAN PERSON." RIESLE CLOSED HIS REMARKS WITH A SPECIAL GREETING TO THE POPE FROM THE GOVERNMENT JUNTA.

2. SEIZING ON RIESLE'S DESCRIPTION OF RECENT CRISIS, IN HIS REPLY, POPE PAUL RECALLED HIS INTEREST IN AND PREOCCUPATION FOR CHILE, "WE HAVE NOT CEASED AND WE WILL NOT CEASE TO FOLLOW WITH THE SAME LIVELY AND PATERNAL SOLICITUDE THE PROBLEMS AND THE DIFFICULTIES STILL EXISTING," POPE ASSURED HIS VISITOR, POPE

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EXHORTED CHILEANS TO BASE FUTURE ON PEACE AND BROTHERHOOD, A

"BROTHERHOOD WHICH, CONQUERING ANIMOSITIES AND RESENTMENTS, EXCLUDING SETTLING OF ACCOUNTS OR VENGEANCE, LOOKS TOWARD REESTABLISHING AN AUTHENTIC AND RECIPROCAL UNDERSTANDING BY THE MEANS OF AN EFFECTIVE AND SINCERE RECONCILIATION." DEPARTING FROM HIS USUAL HABIT OF MENTIONING CHIEFS OF STATE BY NAME, POPE ASKED AMBASSADOR MERELY TO TRANSMIT HIS GREETINGS TO "THE CHILEAN SUPREME AUTHORITIES".

4. COMMENT: DIPLOMATIC OBSERVERS HERE ANTICIPATE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF ROUGH GOING FOR RIESLE WHO ARRIVES AT A TIME WHEN VATICAN PATIENCE IS SOMEWHAT EXASPERATED OVER CONTINUATION OF WHAT CHURCH CONSIDERS UNNECESSARY REPRESSION IN CHILE. IN ADDITION TO HAVING REPUTATION AS ARCH-SUPPORTER OF THE JUNTA, AS WITNESSED BY HIS AUTHORSHIP OF A RECENT BOOK "THE LEGITIMACY OF THE GOVERNING JUNTA," RIESLE IS ALSO KNOWN HERE AS AN OUT-SPOKEN CRITIC OF THE LATE FRENCH PHILOSOPHER AND LAY THEOLOGIAN JACQUES MARITAIN, A MAN WHOM POPE PAUL CONSIDERED AN INTIMATE FRIEND AND MENTOR. VOLPE

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